(d) whether FICCI and various organisations have signed MoUs for cooperation with various organisations and manufacturers association of Israel; and

(e) if so, to what extent India and Israel have signed agreement to improve the trade during 2004-05?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (c) The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) has reported that trade relations between India and Israel are being improved by exchange of business delegations for enhancing cooperation, tie-ups and joint ventures. The total trade between India and Israel in 2002-03 was worth US$ 1.237 billion, which increased to US$ 1.393 billion in 2003-04. FICCI envisages a two-fold increase in bilateral trade in the next couple of years.

(d) and (e) Government is aware that various Indian trade and industry bodies have signed MoUs with their counterpart organisations in Israel from time to time. However, no information is available about such MoUs having been signed specifically for bilateral trade promotion during 2004-05.

Import of medical equipments

1943. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of misuse of the ten-year limit rule by importers of refurbished medical equipment wherein obsolete and outdated equipment is being imported and released from the cargo terminals at Delhi, IGI Airport and Mumbai Airport;

(b) whether there has been a sharp upsurge in imports of outdated and obsolete video processors and endoscopes during the last four months through under invoicing and submission of fake chartered engineers certificates;

(c) the steps being taken to verify the actual date of manufacture by cross checking with the authorized dealers of such companies; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) No case of misuse of the ten year limit rule by importers of refurbished medical equipment through cargo terminal at Delhi, Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi-and Mumbai Air Cargo Complex has come to light;

(b) There is no sharp increase in the import of outdated and obsolete video processors and endoscopes during the last four months through under invoicing and submission of fake Chartered Engineers Certificate. However, import of few old and used C.T. Scan machines have been noticed in the Jawahar Custom House, Mumbai during the last four months and three refurbished video processors and two refurbished endoscopes (all less than ten years old) have been imported through Air Cargo Complex, New Delhi during the last six months;

(c) and (d) In all cases of import of refurbished medical equipments consignments are subjected to 100% examination to verify the serial number of the machine and the date of manufacture. The Toshiba and Ge Brand C.T. Scan machines bear the year of manufacture on their machine plate. Hence, verification from dealers is not required.

Funds for export promotion

†1944. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sanctioned an amount of Rs. 450 crores to encourage exports; and

(b) if so.-the procedure for selection of the exporters and allocation of funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) To encourage exports a "Market Access Initiative" Scheme is operational with an outlay of Rs. 552.00 crore during the 10th Five Year Plan Period.

(b) Under the Scheme, funds are sanctioned to Export Promotion Councils/Apex Chambers/Registered trade bodies/Indian Missions abroad/State Governments after consideration and approval of the proposals by the Empowered Committee constituted for this purpose.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

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